REMARKS

Claims 1, 3-12, 14-23, and 25-35 are pending. These same claims stand rejected. Applicants appreciate the courtesy extended by the Examiner to the Applicants' representatives Greg Plichta and Han Gim during the telephonic interview on December 12, 2007, the content of which is further addressed below.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

Claims 1, 3-12, 14-23, and 25-35 stand rejected under 35 USC §112 because "said list" on lines 2, 4 and 3 of claims 1, 12, and 23, respectively, lack antecedent basis. Applicants have amended the claims to recite "said list of valid exception handlers" as suggested by the Examiner. Applicants respectfully requested withdrawal of the rejection.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

Claims 1, 3, 4, 7-15, 18-23, 25, 29-31, 34, and 35 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over U.S. Pub. No. 2004/0064712 (Arthur et al.) in view of U.S. Pat. No. 7,243,340 (Tobin). It is respectfully submitted that claims 1, 3, 4, 7-15, 18-23, 25, 29-31, 34, and 35 are patentable for the reasons set forth below.

With respect to claim 1, the Examiner contends that the recited element of "said list of valid exception handlers protected from alteration during program execution" is taught by Arthur et al. page 3 paragraph 0047 and Step 105 page 4 paragraph 0053. Applicants respectfully disagree.

As the Applicants explained during the interview, Arthur et al. is directed to preventing the debugging of software during execution in order to prevent reverse engineering of the code (see Abstract). To prevent debugging, the exception handlers are replaced by substitute exception handlers (see page 2 paragraph 0019). Furthermore, the substitute exception handlers are patched into the O/S (page 4 paragraph 0053) *during execution of the program* (page 3 paragraph 0051). Thus Arthur et al. *teaches away* from protecting valid exception handlers from alteration during program execution as was recited in claim 1. To further clarify claim 1, Applicants have amended the claim to recite "said list of valid exception handlers *located in a protected area*

during program execution" (emphasis added). During the interview, the Examiner agreed that, pending a further search, such an amendment overcomes the Arthur et al. reference.

Similar amendments have been made to Claims 12 and 23, which recite similar features to those described in claim 1. Therefore, claims 1, 12, and 23, and their dependent claims including claims 3, 4, 7-11, 13-15, 18-22, 25, 29-31, 34, and 35 are patentable for at least the same reasons. Withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1, 3, 4, 7-15, 18-23, 25, 29-31, 34, and 35 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 is respectfully requested.

Claims 5, 16, 26, 27, and 32 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Arthur et al in view of Tobin as applied to claims 1, 23 or 26, and in further view of U.S. Pat. No. 5,628,016 (Kukol). Claims 5, 16, 26, 27, and 32 variously depend from independent claims 1, 12, and 23, and are therefore patentable for at least the reasons set forth above. Kukol fails to cure the deficiencies of Arthur et al. Kukol generally describes exception handling, but does not teach or suggest determining if an exception handler is valid by comparing the exception handler to a list of valid exception handlers protected from alteration during program execution, determining if the exception handler is unaltered and otherwise determining that the exception handler is invalid. For at least the foregoing reasons, reconsideration of the rejection of claims 5, 16, 26, 27, and 32 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) is respectfully requested.

Claims 6, 17, and 28 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Arthur et al. in view of Tobin and in further view of U.S. Publication No. 20020169999 (Bhansali). Claims 6, 17, and 28 depend from independent claims 1, 12, and 23 respectively, and are therefore patentable for at least the reasons set forth above with respect to these claims. Bhansali fails to cure the deficiencies of Arthur et al. Bhansali generally describes exception handlers, but does not teach or suggest determining if an exception handler is valid by comparing the exception handler to a list of valid exception handlers protected from alteration during program execution, determining if the exception handler is unaltered and otherwise determining that the exception handler is invalid. Therefore, reconsideration of the rejection of claims 6, 17, and 28 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) is respectfully requested.

Claim 33 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Arthur et al. in view of Tobin, and in further view of Kukol and Bhansali. Claim 33 depends from independent claim 23, and is therefore patentable for at least the reasons set forth above with respect to claim 23. The combination of Kukol and Bhansali fails to cure the deficiencies of Arthur et al. Kukol and Bhansali generally describe exception handlers, but do not teach or suggest determining if an exception handler is valid by comparing the exception handler to a list of valid exception handlers protected from alteration during program execution, determining if the exception handler is unaltered and otherwise determining that the exception handler is invalid. Therefore, reconsideration of the rejection of claim 33 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants submit that the above-identified application is in condition for allowance. Early notification to this effect is respectfully requested.

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